



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Case Study on Diversity Policy in Employment and Service Provision

Breda, the Netherlands



Author:

dr. Anja van Heelsum
Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES)
University of Amsterdam
Amsterdam

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Wyattville Road, Loughlinstown, Dublin 18, Ireland
Telephone: + 353 1 2043100, Fax: + 353 1 2826456

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Foreword

This report is part of the Eurofound project "Cities for Local Integration Policy" (CLIP), which started in 2006. Breda is one of the 25 European cities that cooperate in exchanging information on their Integration policies.

The project aims at collecting and analysing innovative policies and their successful implementation at the local level. It will support the exchange of experience between cities and encourage a learning process within the network of cities, addressing the role of social partners, NGO's, companies and voluntary associations in supporting successful integration policies. The project will, provide objective assessment of current practice and initiatives and discuss their transferability, communicating good practices to other cities in Europe and developing guidelines to help cities to cope more effectively with the challenge of integrating migrants. It will also, support the further development of a European integration policy by communicating the policy relevant experiences and outputs of the network to: European organisations of cities and local regional authorities, the European and national organisations of social partners, the Council of Europe and the various institutions of the European Union.

The CLIP network is also a cooperation between cities and research institutes. Five research institutes in Bamberg, Amsterdam, Vienna, Liege and Oxford are taking care of the publications of the CLIP project. The researchers of the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES) of the University of Amsterdam are responsible for this report on Breda. Together with the contact person of the municipal of Breda, Ria Bolink responsible for Diversity Affairs in Breda, an enormous effort has been undertaken to find all necessary data on Breda for this report. Many officials and other parties who are involved with integration and welcome policy have been interviewed during 24-25 September 2007, as the list at the end of the report shows. They have provided us with reports, statistics and comments on the concept version of this report. Secondly the town clerk, the representatives of the Personnel Department, of Well-being and social development, of the Information Desk, of the employees council, of the special project fund have all been willing to provide us with information. I want to thank all those who have cooperated in giving information and particularly Ria Bolink for coordinating the search of data.

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Anja van Heelsum

February 2008, Amsterdam

1 The country: Setting the city and its diversity policies in context

1.1 Brief history of migration to the country and characteristics of migrants and people with a migration background

The Netherlands was an immigration country in the 17th and 18th century, it was at that time a centre of trade and shipping and tolerant to religious refugees. The percentage of immigrants that was around 10%, diminished to a very low level in the first half of the 20th century (Lucassen & Penninx, 2000). After the Second World War emigration was dominant, new farmlands were discovered in the United States, Canada and Australia. As table 1 shows, a negative trend (more emigration) in the fifties turned into a positive trend (more immigration) in the sixties.

Table 1 The Netherlands: estimates of the net number of migrants, by five-year intervals, 1950 to 2000 (in thousands)

Country	1950-1955	1955-1960	1960-1965	1965-1970	1970-1975	1975-1980	1980-1985	1985-1990	1990-1995	1995-2000
Netherlands	-123	-31	36	55	152	168	55	151	190	161

source: MPI, calculated from United Nations Population Division (2001) *World Population Prospects: The 2000 Revision*. (POP/DB/WPP/Rev) 2000/1/F10.

The few immigrants that arrived in the period 1945-1960 came from the former colonies Surinam and Indonesia: Surinamese elite send their children to study and Indonesians with one Dutch parent could remain Dutch after the independence in 1949 and the Indonesian army officials from the Moluccan islands that had fought in the Dutch army in Indonesia had to be resettled in the Netherlands because they were not safe in Indonesia. Around 1960 the immigration became more numerous. The first large influx was a result of the regulations around the independence of Surinam (in 1975). While the independence was meant to stop immigration, citizens of this former colony had the right to choose between Surinamese and Dutch nationality for five years and half of the inhabitants of Surinam decided to move to the Netherlands. A second large flow of immigrants was caused by the booming economy and the need for cheap labour from the sixties onwards. Factory and shipyard owners, first in Southern Europe, later in Turkey and Morocco, recruited so-called guest workers. After a period that this looked temporary, their immigration became permanent and wives and children also arrived. During the period that the European Union was further institutionalised, neighbouring countries, in particular Germany, also added to the number of immigrants. In the eighties the economy went down and the first measures were taken to stop immigration. A considerable refugee population was growing in that period, at first from the then communist countries but in the last decades mainly from third world war areas in the world: Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Somalia and other countries. Since 2000 the number of Chinese and Polish immigrants is increasing considerably. The number of Poles is expected to grow fast from 2007 onwards.

The percentage of people with a foreign nationality is stably around 4.3% since 1997. The number of naturalisations has been going up from 12,800 in 1990 to 82,700 in 1996 and down to 45 300 in 2002 according to the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics.

Table 2 shows the largest ethnic groups on January 1st 2006 in three categories that are often distinguished in Dutch statistics, namely immigrants from Western countries, from non-Western countries and from refugee countries. On January 1st the total Dutch population was 16,334,210, of which 13,186,595 (81%) were considered as autochthonous Dutch (note that anybody with one or two parents born abroad is not considered autochthonous).

Table 2 Largest immigrant groups to the Netherlands based on country of origin and country of origin of parents, Jan 1st, 2006

	Total	1st generation	2nd generation
<i>Western countries</i>			
Germany	383 941	101 718	282 223
Belgium	112 222	35 887	76 335
UK	76 270	43 755	32 515
<i>Non-Western countries</i>			
Indonesia	393 175	128 823	264 352
Turkey	364 608	195 947	169 661
Surinam	331 953	187 630	144 323
Morocco	323 272	168 566	154 706
Dutch Antilles	129 730	79 944	49 926
Former Yugoslavia	76 382	53 612	22 720
Former Soviet Union	46 058	35 343	10 720
China	45 568	32 332	13 530
Poland	45 568	29 731	15 833
<i>Refugees</i>			
Iraq	43 778	35 268	8 510
Iran	28 781	23 638	5 143
Afghanistan	37 307	32 049	5 258
Somalia	19 875	13 667	6 208

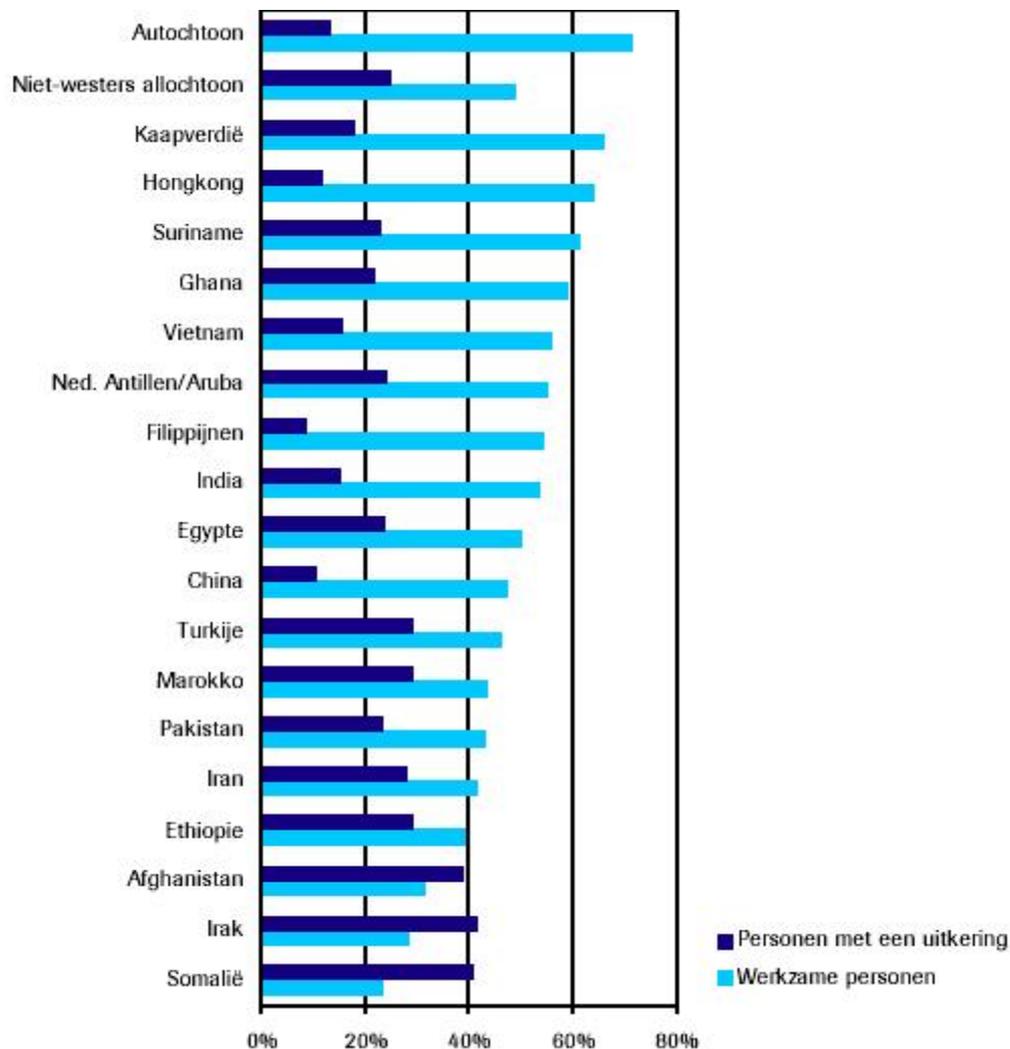
Source: Statline (Central Bureau for Statistics)

As table 2 shows, the older immigrant groups consist already of a large second generation. Within these groups the male/female ratio is around 50%. The refugee populations consist for a larger degree of men (for instance Iraqi 58% men, Iranians 53% men). The relatively new immigrant groups, Poles and Soviet citizens consist of a larger percentage of women (both 60 % women). The distribution in age groups also depends on the time of arrival. Among Indonesians an aging population is more and more visible. The first arrived Turkish and Moroccan guest workers are now in their sixties and seventies. Among the new immigrant groups, like Iraqi, Iranians, Afghani's, we don't see many elderly. In general the non-western immigrant groups have larger families than the Dutch and the western immigrants.

The socioeconomic status of immigrants from the neighbouring countries is either similar to the level of the Dutch or better. The socioeconomic standard of non-western immigrant groups is generally poorer than the Dutch level. This in particular true for the former guest workers from Morocco and Turkey and for refugees. This general remark is not true for every particular ethnic group. Figure 1 shows the percentage of people working and/or on welfare

per ethnic group. Welfare includes social security benefit, unemployment benefit, health benefit or disability allowance.

Figure 1 Percentage of persons with work and/or welfare in 2004 (15-65 year old)



source: WODC, Integratiekaart 2006, p.26 (made from information by SSB)

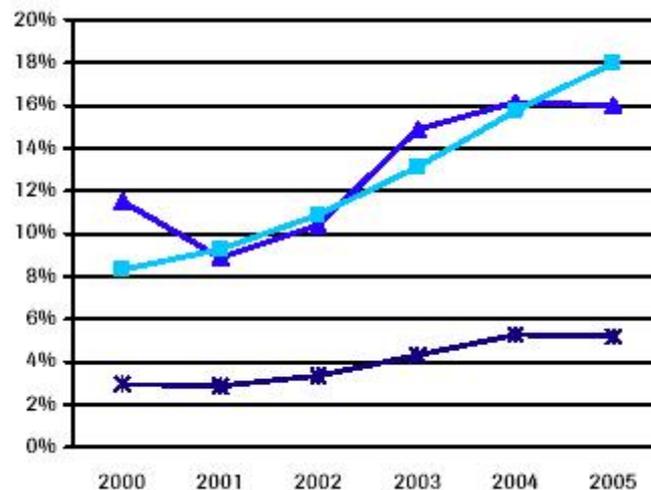
As figure 1 shows, the percentage of working people is among all ethnic groups larger than the percentage of people on welfare, except for Afghani, Iraqi and Somali refugees.¹ The highest percentages of working people and the lowest percentages of people on welfare are found among Dutch, and people from Hong Kong, the The Philippines and China. Though the three refugee groups from Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia are the most problematic group, not all refugee groups have a larger proportion of people on welfare than working: this is not true for Vietnamese (who arrived relatively earlier) and Iranians. The four largest non western immigrant groups, Suriname, Turks, Moroccans and Antilleans have relatively more

¹ Note that asylum seekers are not allowed to work until they receive their refugee status

often the net very low social security benefit (a basic sum to survive) while the Dutch have more often the net higher unemployment benefit (a percentage of their last income). The Turkish groups counts more people with a disability allowance than on social security benefit.

As figure 2 shows the unemployment of Dutch is considerably lower than that of non-western immigrants and their children. Alarmingly this does not improve for the second generation, though we have to take into account that not all ethnic groups have a second generation.

Figure 2 Unemployment: Dutch and first and second generation non westerners in % (2000 - 2005)



▲ non western immigrants first generation * Dutch ■ non western immigrants second generation
source: WODC, Integratiekaart 2006

1.2 General national integration policy

Rijkschroef, Duyvendak & Pels (1993) divide the national policies concerning immigrant in three phases. The first phase in the seventies was a categorical policy focussing at specific fields. There were special provisions for Moluccan ex-soldiers. We'll show later Moluccan neighbourhoods still have certain privileges. The Surinamese, who were not expected in such large numbers, were ad hoc supported by welfare associations, paid by several municipals. In the 'Nota Buitenlandse Werknemers' (1970) guest workers were stimulated to stick to their identity and culture of origin, not to have difficulties on return. Due to the assumption of temporariness, no attempts were made to provide courses with Dutch language and information on the society. A long-term consequence is that the language proficiency of these low educated men is often limited up to this moment.

The second phase starts with a WRR publication of 1989, which leads to the first policy document called 'Minority Policy' (Minderhedennota 1983). The Dutch government realised that the stay of guest workers was not temporary anymore and the thinking about immigrants shifted to more worry and concern. This policy was directed at stopping a trend that immigrants were acquiring a permanent disadvantaged social position and measures were taken on the terrain of education and labour market. Integration was considered a two-sided process, and respect for the cultures of immigrants was important in this policy document.

There was a positive attitude towards the rights of religious groups, for instance on establishing mosques and Hindu temples.

Rijkschroef and others (2003) call the third phase 'integration policy', starting in 1989 with the WRR document 'Allochtonenbeleid'. Documents like 'Contourennota Integratiebeleid Etnische Minderheden' (1994), 'Investeren en Integreren' (1994), 'Kansen krijgen, kansen pakken' (1997-1998) show an urge to motivate and mobilise immigrants to learn the language, increase information and to adjust to Dutch culture. Professional courses became obligatory for newcomers. The problems of the children of immigrants in the educational system become clearer and are now targeted.

A fourth phase started around 2001 because representatives of the right wing parties became minister of integration affairs, first Nawijn (LPF) and then Verdonk (VVD). Both were known for anti-immigrant standpoints. Many proposals to limit the rights of foreigners to level below the rights of Dutch were discussed in the second chamber, but implementation was not always realistic because the inequality of law was too serious. The debate in the media became harsher and more unfriendly to immigrants, and many of them felt very uncomfortable. This period lasted until the elections of 2006. The new government in 2007 sees to have a friendlier approach to immigrants.

2 The city

2.1 Brief description of the city: location, history

Breda is a medium size city with a population of 170.495 inhabitants (per 1 January 2007, O&I Breda). It acquired the official status of a town (town rights) in 1252 around the castle of Breda. In the 14th century it was surrounded with a defence wall and canals.

1) Historically it is an army town. There are several institutes for middle and higher education in the army and even a small, but unique in the country, military university (since 1828 in the castle). These institutions are the result of connection with the royal family for over 750 years. Many historical buildings, in the centre of town (castle, cathedral, harbour, gardens) and outside the town (country houses, hunting grounds with facilities) also result from the royal connection. These buildings have become tourist attractions.

Breda's city centre is compact, the surface is well used and the density of building is quite high. From the 1950's onwards the city expanded its borders, large new housing areas were built and several villages and industrial areas were incorporated. Also in the last ten years new neighborhoods have been added. The former villages, which belong to Breda nowadays, have kept their special village culture and character. The housing projects from the 50's now need improvement. The map of Breda outside the city walls looks like a patchwork of industrial areas, housing areas and green village areas.

2) Breda has always been a centre of trade. Because of the central position in the province Brabant, on the crossroads from north to south, and right in between the big harbours of Rotterdam and Antwerp (Belgium), Breda is an ideal place for establishing the main offices of

international companies. There has been some industry, like textile, chemicals, chocolate, beer and fruit products (juices, canned fruit, soft drinks), but almost all of them have closed their gates. There were no big factories, attracting low-skilled workers. This is the reason that Breda only hosts 10% non-western inhabitants. Breda is currently trying to present itself as a modern service-, high tech and culture based city. The high tech- and creative technical industry is leaping forward and Breda would like to address itself as "game-valley". Recently a "gaming-academy" was opened, to train future game-designers.

Next to this Breda aims at logistic services, knowledge industry and hospitality.

3) In the field of culture Breda has one of the biggest theatres in the region, which attracts people from a large distance. The cultural climate is a bit conservative, although this is changing slowly in the last years. Experimental forms of art and theatre are not often found in Breda, in contrast to Tilburg, which is about 35 kilometers. Breda doesn't have a university, possibly this explains the conservative, somewhat "bourgeois" culture. Breda is a middle class town. Statistical research shows that Breda is often the perfect average in the Netherlands.

4) Breda has a central function in the region of Western Brabant, in terms of shopping, social services, hospitals and cultural facilities. Breda has a fast train connection with Rotterdam and Antwerp, the new High Speed Line (HSL) will pass through Breda. When the HSL is finished it will give Breda excellent connections to Antwerp, Brussels, Paris and Barcelona.

5) Breda is the first city after crossing the main rivers that divide the North and the South of the Netherlands. The South is supposed to be more easy going, which is related to Catholicism and a more 'Burgundian' lifestyle. This means people like to enjoy good meals, drink and like to party. This in contrast to the Calvinist culture that rules the north. Breda is known for its bars and of course the carnival.

2.2 Immigrants in Breda

On Jan 1st, 2006 about 10% of the population of Breda consists of non-western immigrants (this includes the second generation with at least one parent of immigrant origin), while another 10% is of western origin.

Table 3 Composition of the population Breda in ethnic groups, per Jan 1st, 2007

	Number	Percentage
Dutch	135 808	79.7
Turks	2 866	1.7
Moroccans	5 007	2.9
Surinamese	2 052	1.2
Antilleans	2 017	1.2
Refugees	302	0.2
Others, incl. western immigrants and Moluccans	22 443	13.2
Total	169 883	100.0

The gender division of the ethnic groups in table 3 is in nearly all cases 50/50, except among the Dutch and among 'others' where we find more women among whom East European and South Americans.

A specific situation in Breda compared to most other Dutch cities, is that Breda has a Moluccan neighbourhood. In 1951 the former soldiers of the Dutch army in Indonesia KNIL were demobilised in camps in the Netherlands. The national government asked several cities to build neighbourhoods for these Moluccans, since they wanted to stay together and thought that they would one day get the chance to move back to the independent republic Moluccu Selatan on the Moluccan islands. Breda has build 93 houses for this specific group between 1963-1966, and another 15 in 1982. Currently 130 Moluccan families live in a neighbourhood, that is called De Driesprong and that also has a Moluccan Evangelical Church and a community centre. The fact that the Moluccan community existed of ex-soldiers (and their wives and children) made them feel at ease in a town with a military tradition like Breda. Because of the military academy in Breda it was one of the few places they knew in the Netherlands. Moluccans refuse up to now the Dutch nationality and have remained stateless. The Moluccan community signed an agreement with the local authorities to ensure that their culture and way of life is respected within the background of the special historic circumstances. Breda is one of the 70 municipals that have a Moluccan area.

The second considerable immigration was of Surinamese, Antilleans, Turks and Moroccans. Of course Turks an Moroccans came for work, or were selected by the numerous agencies that 'imported' labour force", Breda is a so called "Antillean city" because more than 1% of the population comes from the Antilles (Dutch Caribbean)

The immigration by refugees in the last ten years is a consequence of the national policy. When asylum seekers receive their refugee status, their names are forwarded to municipals everywhere in the country, that are obliged to provide them with suitable housing outside the normal waiting lists.

The age structure of the bigger migrant groups is very different from the average in Breda. Especially Turks and Moroccans have high percentages of young people, for instance: Turkey: 62% younger than 29 years, 33% is younger than 14 years. This is almost the same among Moroccans. Among Surinamese 27% is between 10 and 27 years old. Half of the population that come from the Antilles is between 9 and 29 years.

Among the Surinamese and Antilleans 30% lives in a one-parent-family, very often with only the mother, only 17% live in a two-parent-family. Of the Turks and Moroccans over 50% live in a complete family with father and mother.

The socio economic position of Surinamese, Turks, Moroccans, Antilleans and refugees is in general not very good. Most of the migrants have a low income, so they depend on social housing. They are also more often unemployed. Compared to the percentage of the total population, they are 1.4 to 2.8 times more often unemployed. Considering the fact that a lot of migrant women are not working, this rate is even higher.

The unemployment among people over 40 years old is very high, compared with the Dutch. This group is very often unemployed or on disability benefit or for a longer period and has limited chances to fever find work again.

The information on the Moluccan group comes from a different source. When the Moluccan neighbourhood is rank ordered in a list of all Breda's deprived neighbourhood, it ends up in the 23rd position, while the neighbourhood where most Moroccans live ends up somewhere

in the top of the list. This shows that the position of Moluccans have relatively improved in the last 20 years.

2.3 The city authority: tier of government, responsibilities, structure

Breda has a broad coalition of four left and centre parties (Dutch Labour Party/PvdA, Christian democrats/CDA, Green left/Groen Links and the local party Breda '97). There are six aldermen. The diversity policy is part under responsibility of the alderman (a lady) for Social Affairs, Labour market, Wellbeing, Integration, Ground, Breda cooperating companies (BSW) and Accommodation.

In the organisational structure, diversity policy is in the department of Well-being. The diversity policies are basically written and executed by one person, who is in constant discussion with all the colleagues that she needs for specific topics. Though this is a difficult position the official has enough room for manoeuvring, since she knows the bureaucracy very well and gets easily access to other departments. Beside that, the policy she carries out, is officially determined by the city council, so she can use that as a starting point.

3 The city's approach to diversity

3.1 Historical background

The current integration policy of Breda is described in the last policy document 'Integration Agenda 2005-2006' (Integratie Agenda 2005-2006). This policy document was based on the 'Monitor 2004', which exists of research data on the ethnic groups in Breda and an overview of the ongoing projects and possible projects and the policy document "Couscous met Appelmoes" (Couscous with applesauce) from 2000.

As the author of the documents explains, the policy is still based on three principles from 2000: equality of cultures, equal chances and opportunities and reciprocity. Though it uses the definition of integration from a national document (Commissie Blok), it is fully based on the concepts and thinking of a diversity policy.

Both the monitor and the policy document consists of four main chapters, namely 1) housing (note that the word 'wonen' in Dutch means both housing and living, so this includes neighbourhood work and safety) 2) work 3) care, subdivided in education, well-being, health and 4) culture (performing arts). Subjects like political participation, migrant associations or religious services for migrants are integrated into these chapters. After this, we find a chapter that states that the implementation of the policy will concentrate on the neighbourhoods that are subject of restructuring and that have high concentration of immigrants. Because of the combination of problems in these areas like bad quality houses, unsafety, unemployment and school dropout, a goal should be to offer coherent services on neighbourhood level. A direct consequence of the diversity thinking is, that the next chapter is devoted to interculturalisation of the services, and firstly the local administration itself. This includes the proposal to set targets on the number of immigrant staff and a project on developing

intercultural competence among the employees. The last chapter - on communication - focuses also on intercultural competences, besides it aims to gain public support of the policy.

All chapters have lists of projects that are either implemented or wanted in the future, with their goal, the responsible department and partners and the source and amount of funds. Not surprisingly, the largest list of projects and allocated funds are found under 'care' and well-being.

A separate document, named 'Dunya' has been written in 2004 on immigrant women, because of the involvement in the PaVEM committee. It contains a quick scan with demographic and socio-economic information, the so-called Participation agenda, and a list of planned projects with possible financial sources. The Dunya approach focuses on language and work. Plans include language lessons at home for women that cannot get out of the house, plans to attract more women for the usual language programmes through schools and nurseries, and plans for a follow-up language courses if language proficiency after the first course is too low for labour participation (so called Taal-plus). The work programme in Breda includes among others: coaching 10 higher educated women to find work, lead at least 8 women to volunteer work, recruit 50 work placements by organising an employer breakfast, furnish an information centre with access for women to computers. Another tool, which was introduced by the PaVEM committee, was the local "P-team" (P. for Participation). This is a group of 10-15 women with different cultural backgrounds, who advises the local authorities and organisations on cultural diversity and integration policy. Breda was the first to have such a P-team.

The policy seems politically left oriented, which shows in the choice of the main subjects. The criterion for success is usually the participation rate in the different fields. The city council and mayor and aldermen have tried to counterbalance the negative imaging in the national policy of the last government, even when representatives of their own political party proclaimed it. The national integration policy of the last two governments was contested in Breda: these governments concentrated on restrictions on immigration and compulsion on the terrain of language and integration. The negative image of Muslims and the blunt statements of Dutch politicians like Verdonk and Wilders in the media caused a negative climate. Islam and the visible expressions of this religion were arduously discussed. A growing resistance among Dutch towards immigrants and a growing resistance among immigrants against this policy lead to an increasing gap between them. In some cases immigrants withdrew in their own group, in extreme cases to fundamentalist Islam. With the current government Breda is happier.

Breda wants to, and has always proclaimed a positive view on immigration. The credo is: Breda is a city where everyone feels safe, welcome and respected. It wants to provide opportunities, facilitate dialogue and include immigrants in policymaking, labour market and politics. In some cases the city ignored the national policy. According to the official working on diversity policy was not easy to work under these circumstances. The diversity policy on local level had to swim against the tide of national negative imaging. Fortunately the current government is more positive and a positive view has always been supported within the municipal.

The press is often interested in criticizing the achievements of the diversity policy. Since many journalists are white males, they are not always convinced of the need to diversify. But

as the city representative states, their comments can be used as a mirror for the efforts that are made by the municipal. The diversity officer uses comments in the media creatively to direct the process in the right direction.

3.2 Objectives of the policy/approach

In general the purpose of the diversity policy is to provide conditions for everyone to practice shared or active citizenship. All citizens should have equal access to the means that are necessary for this. Shared or active citizenship stands for the willingness to actively contribute to society, citizenship means to participate. It means that inhabitants have the liberty and the possibility to participate in all aspects of life. The general political opinion has always been that integration has to take place in daily life, close to people, so it at school, at work and in the streets. This resulted from the necessity to contribute to the mere execution of integration laws in a creative way.

The national policy points at so called ‘non western allochthones’, which means people who are themselves or one of their parents born in Turkey, Africa, Latin America or Asia with the exception of Japan and Indonesia (CBS definition, quoted from CBS/WODC (2007:1). The policy of Breda doesn’t point at certain ethnic or religious groups, but reasons from the perspective of the management of diversity. When data show that ethnic or cultural groups are behind, targets can be formulated about this, but in the realisation of projects this difference is not made. To achieve the targets there is extra effort to reach groups with the highest non-participation rate.

3.3 Responsibility: elected representatives and officials

The alderman who is politically responsible is the alderman of Social affairs, Well-being, Labour Market, Integration, ‘Additional’ Companies and the Ground Company. The mayor also takes political responsibility on some occasions. For instance when the contract for the Pilot “Toolkit participation” project (part of PaVEM) had to be signed, the mayor wanted to do this himself, because he realised that it was desirable and politically valuable. It often takes considerable effort of the diversity officer to present proposals in a way to get the interest of the mayor and the other politicians.

Within the council there is no commission on diversity policy, because diversity policy is an inclusive policy, which has to be implemented in all fields of policy.

As we already explained in 2.3 the official in charge of diversity policy works in the Department of Well-being. Since April 1st 2007 the name of this department has changed into ‘Social Development’. All departments have a ‘sector director’, who can be held responsible for the service provision within that department. He is supposed to give tools to team-leaders and heads of sub-departments to implement the policies. A general direction board takes decisions that directors have to implement.

3.4 Collaboration with social partners and non-governmental organisations in policy development and implementation

Social work is done by a privatised foundation in Breda, and this foundation has used professional support paid by the municipal to work with interculturalisation methods. The

same is true for the Foundation for Social Work for Elderly. This institution works with these methods.

The Support Organ for Volunteering and Sport, also a privatised foundation, started earlier - in 2004 - and put diversity as one of the main issues after two foundations on volunteering and sport merged. This organ organises trainings in sport clubs and NGO's to become more diverse. NGO's were the first ones that had to prove that they are 'diversity proof' to get their annual grants. Cooperation with migrant associations is important in this process. Migrant organisations themselves also need to work on their diversity, which is usually not easy because they are established for one single immigrants community.

3.5 Policy and practice on monitoring progress

The first monitor was set up in 2004. This can be considered a start measure; the intention is to measure all variables again in 2007. The data come from the municipal statistical department and from national reports. The municipal statistical department has added the variable ethnicity to its dataset to make tables and calculations with this variable possible.

To extend the monitoring in the 2007 round, some qualitative research has been added. Focus groups were held on social participation and contacts between Dutch and other ethnic groups. A problem is a lack of budget for research, as in other cities. The costs of research by the statistics department of the city have to be paid internally, in this case by the diversity department and there is usually very little money.

Forum, the national institute for multicultural development, is working on a local integration chart. This will become a computer program that withdraws data from the national statistics bureau database on one specific municipal and that makes these local data accessible to municipalities.

3.6 Key challenges faced in implementation and broad lessons learnt (detail covered in subsequent sections)

Actually the general the implementation of the integration policy of Breda is quit effective and successful. This has probably a lot to do with the dedication, the persuasive power and the strong networking capacity within the municipal administration of the diversity manager. For an outsider it seems dangerous that the diversity manager has to do this on her own. Her knowledge and probably a large part of the network would disappear when this officer decides to take another job. A challenge for Breda is to secure the diversity policy with more officials, councillors, and aldermen and in more departments in the municipal. There are some managers, who don't know anything about diversity, and one cannot expect that a single person can initiate everything alone.

Another challenge that Breda faces is that politicians, managers and media do not find special policies very urgent because there are no serious problems or tensions between ethnic groups. Compared to other cities, Breda has a limited percentage of non-western immigrants. On the occasion that a national plan concerning immigrants and diversity was launched, and Breda was invited to participate, it took the diversity officer extreme effort to convince the responsible alderman that Breda is really needed in this project. One of the partners remarked in despair: 'does a murder have to take place, before we can proceed?'. Bringing politically

responsible persons together with the target group of the policy is one of the things that make projects work. Personal bond between politicians, policymakers and immigrants make policies work better: the problems become less anonymous, and the convictions and power of these individuals make the situation clearer and real.

3.7 Potential future policy development

One of Breda's priorities in the future will be to present a positive image of cultural diversity, contrary to the negative portrayal in the national press and media, who have been presenting cultural diversity as a source of problems. Though the policy is politically highly prioritised, a lot of details have to be worked out and need to be implemented. Currently civic servants are trained on diversity and inclusive policy. Trainings and a process of interculturalisation is also promoted at the local institutions and organisations. It is the intention that quality demands on interculturalisation become a requirement for subsidy or assignment.

4 Employment: policy, practice and outcomes

4.1 Profile of city employees: data

Breda has a total of 2165 employees. A lot of services have been privatised in the last twenty years and get contracts from the municipal. In table 4 the number of employees in the different departments is shown.

Table 4 Formation and occupancy 31-12-2006 in FTE per department of the organisation.

Organisational department	Formation (in FTE)	Occupancy (in FTE)
Board of directors (directieraad)	4	4
Cabinet of the mayor (kabinet)	8	10
Concern (concern)	22	23
Clerk (griffier)	9	8
Chamber of finances (rekenkamer)	1	1
Department of civil affairs (afdeling burgerzaken)	35	34
Department of taxes (afdeling belastingen)	31	32
Department of public communication (afdeling publieksvoorlichting)	3	3
Department of development and information (afdeling Ontwikkeling en Informatie)	21	19
Library (Bibliotheek Breda)	63	60
Cultural centre De Nieuwe Veste	59	59
National museum of graphic arts (Nationaal Museum voor Grafische kunst)	12	11
Breda's Museum	21	18
Department of economical affairs and project management (Vakdirectie Grondbedrijf, Economische Zaken en Projectmanagement)	51	43
Department of municipal development (Vakdirectie Stedelijke Ontwikkeling)	127	110 ²
Department of environment (Vakdirectie Milieu)	47	43
Department of culture (Vakdirectie Cultuur)	12	12
Department of external space (Vakdirectie Buitenruimte)	276	246
Department of governance of corporations (Vakdirectie Beheerbedrijven)	183	159
Department of social affairs (Vakdirectie Sociale Zaken)	215	200
Department of well-being (Vakdirectie Welzijn)	41	40
Department of companies control (Accommodatiebedrijf)	56	48
Rest of departments ³	14	13
Fire brigade	104	172
United companies (BSW bedrijven)	137	134
Shared Service centre	362	328
Total number of FTE's	1914	1830

source: Social Year Report Breda

² Including the voluntary fire brigade

³ These are regional department, , department of staff, support & Control.

As table 4 shows, the largest department is the shared service centre, after that social affairs and external space. We have no information on the number of immigrants in these departments.

Table 5. *Some key figures on the municipal staff of Breda 2005 - 2006*

	2005	2006
Formation (FTE)	1 947	1 914
Occupancy (FTE)	1 805	1 830
Percentage of non occupied jobs		
Number of staff members	2 139	2 165
Mean age	43.5	44.1
Mean contract duration in years	12.6	12.0
Percentage of part time staff	39.1	39.9
Percentage of man	58.0	58.0
Percentage of women	42.0	42.0
Salary scale 0-5	617	599
Salary scale 6-10	1 156	1 176
Salary scale 11 and higher	366	390

As we can see in table 5 there is a slight overrepresentation of men among the staff: 58% (1255) in 2006 was male and 42% (919) female. People stay rather long in the municipal: the mean number of years is 12. As in most municipals the largest category of the officials works in the intermediate salary scales (6-10). The mean age of the officials is 44, so a bit higher than the mean working age (40). The age group between 40 and 49 is also relatively large, as table 6 shows.

Table 4 *Municipal staff in age groups, 2006*

Age groups	Number
< 25	45
25 - 29	132
30 - 39	524
40 - 49	745
50 - 55	384
56 - 59	282
60 - 64	48
> 65	5
Total	2 165

Source: Social Year Report Breda

After the obligatory registration through the national law “Wet Samen” was abolished on the first of January 2004, Breda went on asking the question on ethnic identity to new employees, but figures were not presented in the Social Year Report anymore. We received these data from the personel department, but one has to note that it is not obliged to answer the quetion on ethnicity and some employees prefer to be registered as Dutch.

The large majority of the officials of the council of Breda are Dutch, 87 of 1873 in non-Dutch. So the total percentage of ethnic minority staff members is only 5 % and that is considerably lower than the 20% in the Breda population (we don't have the percentage of immigrants in the workforce). Unfortunately data are not split up in ethnic groups.

4.2 Employment diversity policy including target sections of the population to which it is directed and occupations covered

Breda has no employment policy towards diversity. Both the responsible politician, the head of the municipal staff (town clerk) and the head of the personnel department state that diversity of staff is an important issue, but no special efforts have been made to attract new employees from migrant groups. Some factors have caused this: on the one hand, there was no urgency, no problems with the services, no request from the citizens and no lack of applicants. Secondly the fact that six personnel departments merged into one in March 2006, distracted the attention from more strategic issues in Human Resource Management to the basic organisational process (paying salaries, supporting resignations and new appointments). Thirdly after the 'Wet Samen' was abolished, the right wing attitudes by the national government didn't make it easier to promote immigrant staff's rights - though Breda's officials say that this has not influenced the policy a lot, surely it hasn't encouraged thinking about the issue.

It is probable that a diversity policy on the councils' personnel will be formulated in the near future, since the officers in charge are currently all convinced that it is important that the staff is not completely white. Firstly it is seen as a positive message to the immigrant citizens that the administration works also for them, secondly it will be easier to reach all sections of the population this way through their networks. It would be logical to use the percentage of immigrants in Breda's population as a target.

Some small initiatives have taken place: certain work placements for training are reserved for immigrant and money is reserved to organise work experience and training of students in the departments. And two trainings for 25 employees and policy makers were held in 2006 and 2007. These 25 employees are supposed to become the vanguard in a new attempt to boost the diversity policy.

4.3 Challenges and tensions in development and implementation of policy

A challenge in Breda is that a plan has been written but the implementation actually has - to a large extent - not taken place. Though a concept policy plan was already effective in 2002, that several departments received positively, the implementation never started because of excuses and financial and organisational problems. That the subject was not structured and not attached to the general policy is probably an important reason for this. In 2000 every department had its own Human Resource Management bureau, and the diversity manager had the impossible task to convince them all to participate and to motivate them for collective action. In 2006 the new merged HRM department was busy with the basic processes (job rating, paying salaries). The time seems now right to formulate clearer targets and to start judging directors on results.

The need for implementing a diversity policy on personnel is broadly accepted, but it is not actively implemented. It therefore depends on the incidental initiatives. Firstly the city

council and the board of directors should take this as an important spearhead, so that a consequent and structured policy can be written and carried out. Approached from the viewpoint of quality management, diversity management should be an obligatory part of a modern management style. This is acknowledged, but it was not (yet) actively transferred into targets or behaviour. However, in the "Participation Agenda 2008-2010" which will be presented to the city council in January 2008 targets on traineeships, employment and career planning will be included.

We also noticed opposition against diversity policy. A group claims that the organisation is equally accessible for everyone and "newcomers" have to adapt to the dominant culture. This opposition is small, but not everyone is open about his views. On the lower levels in the organisation, a large group simply doesn't realise that the organisation is not equally accessible for immigrants and that it tends to produce a replica of itself by having only males above 40 in its application commissions. For instance the employees' council reasons as follows: they never receive complaints about this kind of issues, and therefore they assume that application procedures are fair and there is not need of extra attention. According to the diversity officer the fact that a diversity policy is not implemented yet is laziness, combined with the lack of urgency.

After hearing some of the managers of the intermediate level, we note that some find it completely unimportant and probably undesirable, and others find their ways without a clear-cut policy to find immigrant staff members for the services most directed to immigrants. Securing further support for this kind of policy seems necessary.

4.4 Recruitment, training and promotion

In general there is no policy to recruit immigrants from other channels than the usual ones. It is known that not many immigrants apply on newspaper advertisements, but that is taken as a fact. Managers are supposed to give preference to internal applicants and reorganisation victims, but as one of them explains: 'it is easy to avoid such rules when you really want a Moroccan girl at the counter'. The coordinator of a department that is directly serving immigrants explains that he has taken care to have some immigrants from the main groups, avoiding the rule on internal applicants. He thinks that a policy is not necessary to achieve this. He has succeeded to find suitable people and takes care that one group doesn't dominate the other.

For the Information Counter people are chosen who can empathize with the groups that appear at the counter, who have a lot of patience to understand them, and who can easily talk in plain language and use their hands if necessary. Most of them are Dutch, and there is one Moroccan girl and one Moroccan trainee (with headscarf).

Training is offered for unemployed and students for periods from two months to half a year with a specific assignment. Internal training to raise the level of sitting staff members, and to develop young high potential is organised, but there is no special attention for immigrants.

The head of the personnel department suggests that a high potential courses for a mixed group of 12 newcomers and 12 current employees could work; he thinks this would be a way to break the existing pattern. The newcomers would have a guaranteed job at a higher level after the course and get some practise.

Promotion takes place at schools, universities and other the educational institutions, but not specifically in migrant circles. The head of the personnel departments remarks that the educational institutions have a considerable number of immigrant youngsters, but this doesn't reflect in the applications to the municipal. For the 40 work placements for students per year nearly no immigrant ever applies. There seems to be something wrong with the image that the municipal has: a boring low paying employer, which doesn't offer extra facilities like lease cars and mobile phones. With the current economic situation, commercial companies are more attractive.

4.5 Equal pay and working conditions

Rules on qualifications and conditions are the same for all employees. If unfair situations occur a complaint procedure is possible or a procedure in the court.

4.6 Harassment

Within the municipal organisation there are officers that receive complaints confidentially. Not many complaints have anything to do with ethnic issues within the staff. The coordinator of the Information Counter (Loket Wegwijs), which gives information on welfare, the citizenship courses for immigrants, all forms of care and well being, has a policy towards harassment by customers. At this counter welfare recipients of a more problematic background can turn up, like mental patients and asocial individuals. When racist comments or harassment takes place employees can refuse service and even call the security and have this person removed from the building.

4.7 Accommodation of cultural and religious needs

There is no prayer room for Muslims. Most arrangements are appointments between heads and employees. During Ramadan some Muslims arrange to leave earlier or to take free days, and this is usually not a problem.

4.8 Health and safety

The language that the municipal uses is Dutch. Leaflets with safety instructions are not translated in any other language than English. In the 1980's Turkish and Arab translations existed, but this is not necessary anymore. Currently most of the immigrant employees speak Dutch, they are not hired if they don't speak Dutch well.

4.9 Induction and language tuition

Since a large section of the new immigrants is obliged to follow the newcomer programme in the Netherlands and the rest can voluntarily join, there is no special introduction or language programme within the municipal administration for newcomers. The obliged course encompasses language training and social orientation.

4.10 Recognition of qualifications

Within the EU there have been attempts to standardize diploma's, but outside the EU not. The process of accreditation of diplomas is not arranged at the municipal level. In the

Netherlands, two centres of expertise work together on evaluating foreign diplomas: educational support centre Nuffic and knowledge centre Colo. These two cooperate in the Information Centre for Credential Evaluation (IcDW).⁴ When people work, this costs 113 euro. Because unemployed immigrants usually arrive at the labour office CWI, the CWI can arrange a free diploma accreditation for them through the institutes above⁵. For protected titles, the professional groupings have their own rules about foreign diplomas, information is given by the Dutch Information Centre for the Recognition of professional Qualifications (IRAS), in Nuffic. Complaints on not correctly valued diploma's can be dropped at the IcDW.

Many applicants actually have Dutch diplomas. Application commissions do not just look at diplomas but also at relevant experience, so the diploma issue is not always so important.

4.11 Complaints

The municipal has an internal general complaint regulation. Employees can drop complaints about all kinds of subjects here and these are treated in the same manner. We already explained in 4.6 that certain staff members talk about confidential issues. Every department has such a person.

4.12 Special initiatives

The diversity officer arranges informal 'Meet and Greet Meetings' between staff members and groups of immigrants. Some 60 representatives of African organisations came to such a meeting that took place at the municipal building in the summer of 2007. Another meeting will be held with Moroccans in autumn of 2007. The reasoning behind this, is that staff members won't become intercultural when they don't have direct contact and if they don't get acquainted with some citizens. Interculturalisation training is not enough; it is necessary to develop practical knowledge among officials. A relation between people has to develop to let them communicate well. Officials get to talk to immigrants and get confronted directly with their questions. They learn to understand the immigrants, develop personal contacts in immigrant communities and they are also more easily found by these African representatives when they need something in the municipal organisations.

Direct contact with for instance the official working on elderly, leads to direct phone calls with him or her and direct questions to him or her.

4.13 Monitoring

The municipal registers ethnic background of staff, so it would be easy to find out to what extent they are underrepresented in higher salary scales. The system of exit-talks when an

⁴ <http://www.idw.nl/index2.html>

⁵ https://www.werk.nl/portal/page/portal/werk_nl/werknemer/meer_weten/kansen_

[vergroten/werkenin nederland/diplomawaardering](https://www.werk.nl/portal/page/portal/werk_nl/werknemer/meer_weten/kansen_vergroten/werkenin nederland/diplomawaardering)

employee leaves the organisation makes it possible to find out if immigrants leave faster and for specific reasons. There are unused possibilities to find out whether or not immigrants leave the organisation for specific reasons. It is expected that this will get more attention in the near future.

4.14 Impact of policy and lessons learnt

Breda has a lot of good intentions, but lacks clear and definite agreements within its own administration. It is building up a coherent HRM policy since a central department was established, so it is probable that the situation will improve in the near future. It has turned out difficult to secure this process within the organisation, which has to do with a lack of urgency, a lack of insight among some of the managers why activity is needed, the automatic tendency of the organisation to replicate itself without being aware of it and probably also a fear that right wing staff members or outsiders might protest and get press attention. In theory immigrants have equal chances, but in practice a large scale change in attitude is necessary.

As the head of the personnel department remarks, one can try to put general guidelines on this issue, but the organisation is in a way unruly (promising but not implementing) because not all members of selection committees are convinced of the usefulness. One of the lessons learnt is, that without clear targets and persons responsible, nothing happens. It is important to use both forces at the executive level - for instance colleagues feel that they need someone who understands Moroccans at the information counter, or someone who organises a Turkish cultural shows at the cultural department - and forces from a managerial level to determine the philosophy and the future perspective. When combining forces from below and forces from above, the chance of successful implementation increases.

5 Diversity in service provision

5.1 Services provided and contracted out

The services that are directly provided by the municipal are:

- a) general civil administration, passports and documents
- b) information centre on all municipal products
- c) social security, both financial support and job seeking,
- d) anything that has to do with the law social support (Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning), like provisions for disabled and elderly for instance wheelchairs, domestic help,
- e) immigrant reception and integration: information, intake to estimate the course level, referral to a suitable course, checking if immigrants pass the exam, control on payment.

The services that are contracted out include:

- a) Education: all schools including integration and language courses

- b) Health: besides the usual services (general practitioners, hospitals, psychiatry, geriatrics), a regional organisation provides information, does research and is active in preventive health care and health care for special groups (like schoolchildren). It signs a contract with Breda and the other cities in the region specifying its products.
- c) Social Work: offers social work and social and legal counselling for all citizens. Specialised workers with different ethnic backgrounds are employed. There are no further special services for migrants. The city of Breda, which is the biggest financier, doesn't put special demands the service provision concerning specific ethnic or cultural groups.
- d) Social-cultural work: offers social-cultural activities in neighbourhoods and support to volunteers who want to organise such activities. It also supports looking after the interests of special groups. The city of Breda, which is the biggest financier, demands a substantial contribution on the development of the multicultural society. Is not (yet) formulated according to the SMART principles (= specific, measurable, acceptable, realistic, timely).
- e) Housing: social housing (houses with rents below 615 euro) is managed by social housing corporations. The municipality doesn't have a lot of influence on this, except when it cooperates in neighbourhood restructuring plans.
- f) Care for homeless: is organised in the same way as Social Work under c.

5.2 Diversity policy in services

In the past categorical services existed, but with the growing number of immigrants, the view has become dominant that all municipal services have to work according to a diversity policy and be able to serve migrants and non-migrants. Of course Dutch language courses are only offered to immigrants, but most other services are for all. Active promotion of interculturalisation has become an important aspect of the municipal policy. Services can apply for support on interculturalisation, both advise and financial support.

Consequently the targeted sections of the policy are all the citizens of Breda. To reach all the different groups and individuals public initiatives which aim at bridging the gap between migrants and service provision and giving information and guiding are promoted and financially supported. Examples of this are:

1) The P-team (P stands for participation). A group of women with different cultural backgrounds who advise the municipality and other public service providers on their policy and implementation, organise information meetings for women on different subjects, support women to participate and organise informal information desks close to women in the neighbourhoods where they live.

2) The migrant council is a group of men and women from different cultural backgrounds who give individual information and counselling, organise information meetings for people on different subjects, in the neighbourhoods and look after special migrant-interests.

3) The Platform Migrant Parents and Education informs parents about the education system, stimulates parents to be active in the schools of their children and make them aware of their rights, strengthens the bond between parents, children and education, seen from the

perspective of cultural diversity, and solves structural problems, together with parents and schools, like dropping out without a diploma, cultural clashes between teachers, children and parents.

5.3 Employment profile of service providers

We have no data on this.

5.4 Access to services

Specific services like language education reach most of the poorer immigrants, since the course is obligatory for them. Obligatory language education does not apply to people with temporary study visas or temporary work contracts. It is possible that immigrants who work for years in the Netherlands do not speak any Dutch, unless they go voluntary to a course and pay for it themselves. There is a problem with the new national Law on Citizenship (Jan 2007), because the rules are very complicated: many subgroups like unemployed, mothers, 55+ ers have different arrangements. And there is a financial risk. An immigrant that doesn't pass the exam within one and a half year, has to pay 3000 euro, while the fee for not joining the course is a few hundred euros. The exam is difficult for low educated immigrants. Though most immigrants like to take language lessons, they don't like the financial risk.

For translation at the doctor, hospital, police or anywhere else, the national Translation Service by phone is used (Tolken- en Vertaalcentrum Nederland TVCN).

Translating written material and information leaflet has been abandoned, because the experience showed that it didn't work. In the 1980's all leaflets were translated in English, Turkish and Arab. It was not effective, firstly because low educated Turks and Moroccans didn't read the leaflets in Turkish and Arab, since they are oriented towards oral communication. Secondly because the number of languages has increased so much, that it is simply impossible to translate into all these languages.

The municipal acknowledges that barriers still exist to services for certain citizens. To solve this interculturalisation is actively promoted. In the coming years, the state of diversity and interculturalisation will become a criterion for service providers; the ones that do nothing may lose (parts of) their budgets.

5.5 Monitoring of access and outcomes identified

Breda has no specific monitoring system. For the different subjects there are different means to monitor access. In some cases there are (formal and informal) client panels. The department of social service for instance has an official client board, in which migrants are represented. In the support group WMO (social services), which also has an important monitoring task, migrant organisations are represented.

Participation of immigrants in general surveys is very low, for instance a study on social work/ general health had such low participation figures of immigrants that it is difficult to draw 'hard' conclusions on their views.

There are also no specific data on access of outcomes. There are data about the use of the general social work, but not specifically about the satisfaction of migrant clients. The general feeling, which is based on reports from the staff in the different organisations, reports from migrant customers and from migrant organisations, is that there are still barriers in service provision. If it concerns essential services like income or housing, people find their way, but they are not always satisfied and positive. Especially when it concerns bureaucratic services like complaints about housing or the neighbourhood, people feel they are not taken serious, as turned out in a focus group interviews by the diversity officer during the summer of 2007.

5.6 Cultural awareness of staff

The mayor, the town clerk and the head of the Personnel department attach importance to diversity policy, an intercultural approach and an inclusive policy. Actually when talking to the different staff members on other levels, it becomes clear that some are much more interested in the topic than others. In departments where direct contacts with immigrant clients take place, the cultural awareness is usually better than in departments where they never meet an immigrant. Not all executive staff members and heads are interested in the issue. The good intentions of the people working in the diversity department are not always understood or even refused at some levels.

Some measures to raise cultural awareness were taken. Policymakers could follow a cultural awareness training. Two big external service providers, namely Social Work and Social Work for the Elderly received extra support on their program of interculturalisation. The two can become a examples for the other institutions. At present the municipality is developing a program to increase the intercultural awareness of all the service providers. It organises meetings between policymakers, service providers and groups of clients. It seems that the municipal is succeeding better to promote trainings to service providers, than within its own organisation.

5.7 Discrimination against service users

The first article of the Dutch constitution states that discrimination on all grounds (race, religion, sex, political conviction) is legally forbidden. Literally the law says: All who find themselves in the Netherlands will be treated equally in equal situations. Discrimination because of religion, philosophy of life, political views, race, sex or any other ground, is not allowed.

Breda co-finances the local anti-discrimination bureau. People can complain at this bureau when they feel discriminated in any way. This bureau can also support legal procedures.

5.8 Special initiatives

Breda has a fund of 10 million euro for the next four years to support initiatives of citizens, with the following main goals: activating citizens to come with ideas about their surrounding, increasing social cohesion and supporting groups with difficulties. The plan has to develop into a durable service after the subsidy stops, so it has to be either profitable on it's own or taken over by a service provider. Since 1 Jan 2007 a team received already 117 ideas, and many of them are written by migrant associations and meant to improve the situation in neighbourhoods where immigrants live. The possibility was advertised in information

meeting at migrant associations. When someone comes with a project idea that looks attractive, the officials help to turn it into a well-written proposal with a budget, so lower educated people can also come up with something. An example is called ‘Spraaksaam’ (speak together), an idea of a teacher, to invite mothers into the classroom and involve them with the child’s lessons, while at the same time. Pairs of mothers are formed and immigrants and volunteers that are already active in the neighbourhood have to work for their child. In this manner immigrant mothers become less isolated, are more involved with their kids school performance and learn to know another active mother in the neighbourhood. Eventually they might get interested to join the active mothers activities.

The initiatives of migrants themselves to support their own group on getting information and a fair treatment are very important. The NGO’s and migrants associations concerned with this can play an important role, in the first place towards their own rank and file, but secondly to support the development of competences in general organisations, including the municipality.

That this actually happens is shown by the header of an article in the local newspaper, ‘Natives from Breda also have to integrate’, reporting on a debate about the local diversity policy. Immigrants and their organisations manage to convince the institutions that they have to adjust also.

5.9 Impact of policy on access to and quality of services and lessons learnt

As in the rest of the Netherlands, a categorical approach towards ethnic groups has been abolished. It assumed that all Turks were the same and all Moroccans were the same and a Christian (Armenian) Turk or a non-religious Kemalist family didn’t fit in the picture and had difficulties to be understood. It led to stigmatisation, which influenced the image among the general population.

The current view towards service provision is more and more based on a tailor-made approach. Services should be able to handle all kinds of clients, and therefore to work from an intercultural perspective. Diversity policies are part of this.

The fact that so many services have been privatised lately in the Netherlands, gives the municipal the chance to request conditions for service providers to work in a diverse manner. In some instances this can work positively, but there are also examples where the increase of competition led to a chaotic offer, that is difficult to control. The example of the privatisation of language courses shows, that new small organisations can present themselves very well on paper, but in practice some of them are unprofessional bureaus without equipment. These have replaced the former monopolist ROC that used to run the language courses professionally. The de-professionalisation of language education is taking place everywhere in the Netherlands, not only in Breda, due to the national policy (January 2007) of forcing municipals to create competition and buy language courses cheaply. That 19 girls who studied Dutch signed a petition because they were unhappy about the unprofessional manner of working in one of Breda’s 12 new language institutes, didn’t prevent the municipal from giving this institute a new contract. It was the cheapest bidder. It is a new difficult task for the municipal to control all these small companies and to keep the quality of the service provision at the right standard.

6 Conclusion: Key challenges, lessons and learning for CLIP

A first lesson is that some form of registration of ethnic background is needed to monitor what is going on in the work force of the municipal. Actually Breda has registered for years, but is not using the information.

Breda has a lot of good intentions of high level officials when it comes to its own personnel, but it lacks clear targets and persons who can be held responsible within its own administration. The current attempt to set up a coherent HRM policy seems a good step and a requisite to get further. Securing the process in the organisation is the next point of attention. Some of the managers are not yet convinced of the usefulness of hiring immigrants among their staff. That services can improve for all citizens with some immigrants, seems the easiest to understand, but is not obvious for all. That it is logical that the municipal staff is a blueprint of the Breda workforce is not obvious for all. Both a philosophy is necessary (top down), but also the voices at the work floor have to be heard, who report on problems they have because they don't understand some of the people they need to help. Influencing the constitution of the staff is a subtle process that is not going to work without broad understanding of the necessity.

Communication and information are central concepts. The old channels – flyers, newspaper advertisements and written material – are not as effective as intermediary networks like the Participation Team and the ambassadors' network. Relations have to be build between officials and immigrants, through direct contact. The 'Meet and Greet' gathering, where 60 African immigrants met some 40 officials, and directly talked about their needs, is an example of building practical knowledge about the cultures of immigrants and 'real' relationships.

The tailor-made approach is important in the service provision, while the group approach in the past assumed too much similarity in ethnic groups. No general translations, which have failed in the past, but listening carefully and trying to understand every individual. This is an important principle on all terrains of service provision, not only in education and labour provision, but also in social and cultural work.

With the increasing privatisation of government institutions and the increasing number of private companies and bureaus competing for government money, monitoring the service provision carefully is of most importance. The ongoing changes at national level make this difficult. That the quality of a service is going down in for instance the language institutes we described in chapter 5, has to be prevented. This is a national problem, not something specific for Breda.

Citizens' involvement: the idea of using citizens' ideas to spend municipal money has gained ground in many Dutch municipals. The municipal is reaching out to the population, and citizens can co-decide on what they find important. Though we have seen in other cities that this kind of temporary funding often discriminates low educated and less eloquent people, in Breda the number of ideas that serve immigrants is relatively large. Also in these cases monitoring is important. Secondly it is important that the often low educated foreign citizens do no get lost in the enormous amounts of services, bureaus and initiatives. Dutch bureaucracy is not easy to grasp and more offices don't improve the clarity of the system.

Reaching out to citizens can have the opposite effect for immigrants: it is not clear to which office they need to go with which question.

We conclude saying that Breda is very positively oriented towards immigrants and its general diversity policy is working well. Fortunately the policy managed to stay away from anti immigrant politicians on national level. The diversity policy towards the staff of the municipal will probably improve in the very near future, since it is on the agenda. The service provision is already quit good, though the increasing number of institutions might be complex for low educated immigrants.

Interviews (24-25 September 2007)

Ria Bolink, representative responsible for Diversity Affairs in the Municipal of Breda

Nico van Mourik, Town Clerc, Head of municipal administration (gemeente secretaris)

Roy Hildenbrant, Head of Personnel and Organization Breda

Jan Franken, project leader FMO, supporting initiatives from citizens

Richard Hoetmeer, Head Well-being, Information Service, and Integration of Immigrants

Erik-Jan Voeten, member of employee council (Centrale Ondernemers Raad)

Ger Emmerink, member of employee commission of the Social Affairs Department

Genie Hendriks, policy coordinator WMO (the law on social support of for instance elderly, handicapped, etc.)

Carla Kleijwegt, coordinator Information Service